

PACIFIC WEEKLY

A WESTERN JOURNAL OF FACT AND OPINION

SEPTEMBER 28, 1936

ROUT AT SACRAMENTO

Ernest Albee

John Bond

MORE HUNGRY MEN

Tom Kromer

FORECAST FOR DIXIE

George Albee

REVIEW OF "BURNING CITY"

Sara Bard Field



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SEPTEMBER 28, 1936

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VOLUME V NUMBER 13

CONTENTS

NOTES AND COMMENT	194
SEATTLE DOES WITHOUT HEARST	
A. Sumner Thompson	195
ORGANIZED LABOR ANSWERS THE M. & M., Editorial	196
BROWDER COMES TO DETROIT, Phil McCann	196
ROUT AT SACRAMENTO	
I. Ernest Albee	197
II. John Bond	198
FORECAST FOR DIXIE, George Albee	199
THE CITY DIFFERENT, Miriam Toller	200
UP THE LADDER OF SUCCESS, F. J. S.	201
HOLLYWOOD WEEK, Louis Norden	202
 THEATER	
SMALL MIRACLE AT VERDUN, Lawrence Bernard	204
MORE HUNGRY MEN, Tom Kromer	205
 BOOKS	
HIS SOUL IS MARCHING ON, Sara Bard Field	206
EPIC OR NOT? Will Williams	207
 CORRESPONDENCE	
GROUPS IN ACTION	207
THEY TELL ME	208
OUR CONTRIBUTORS	203

NOTES AND COMMENT

THE open-shop fight in Los Angeles continues, with the issues being ever more sharply defined. At the moment, a favorite tactic on the part of the Merchants and Manufacturers Association is to instigate suits against unions. Recently the Richmaid Creameries, Inc., filed an injunction suit in which they named as defendants the International Brotherhood of Teamsters, Chauffeurs, Stablemen and Helpers, the three locals of the union, the Central Labor Councils of Long Beach, San Pedro and Wilmington, the Long Beach *Labor News*, the staff of the *Harbor Worker*, and many named individuals as well as many fictitious John Does. Superior Court Judge Hight obligingly issued a fourteen-point temporary injunction. In all likelihood, a permanent injunction will be denied when the hearing on the merits is held. But the suit temporarily embarrasses unionization, ties the hands of organizers, and dissipates the energy and resources of the union. The action was filed by Attorney Joseph A. Ball, of Long Beach, representing the plaintiff. Mr. Ball is a close personal friend and classmate of J. Stuart Neary, general counsel for the M. and M. The filing of such actions—and many have been filed in Los Angeles—should be immediately countered by agitation for the enactment, at the next session of the legislature, of a state act patterned after the Norris-LaGuardia federal act, regulating the right of courts to issue injunctions in labor disputes. The M. and M. bulletins are eloquent on "freedom of contract" and self-righteous in their denunciation of the closed shop. But the M. and M. does not tell the citizens of Los Angeles that it believes in and advocates and practices a closed-shop of its own: against the employment of union labor. More and more,

the tendency is to refuse to hire those who admit membership or former membership in trade unions. Union labor should go on the air, should broaden the scope and interests of its newspapers—particularly the *Los Angeles Citizen*—in order to educate the people of Los Angeles on the issues of this historic fight. And lastly, labor in Los Angeles must move out of its shell. It must try and enlist the support of liberal and progressive opinion in Los Angeles. Los Angeles has a rising labor movement, and a large liberal following, but the two forces are not closely associated. They must be brought together.

THE DRIVE against the resident Filipinos (*PACIFIC WEEKLY* August, 24th, 1936) continues to gain momentum. Word comes from Washington, that "many Filipinos in the crews of American passenger and cargo vessels may lose their jobs" when the new Merchant Marine Act becomes effective on September 27th, 1936. This act provides that on subsidized passenger vessels a certain percentage of the crew must be citizens. Since May 1st, 1934—when the Philippine Island Independence Act was accepted—Filipinos have been regarded as aliens. Hence, some 1500 Filipino seamen, stewards' helpers, and musicians working on American ships in the Pacific, will be thrown out of employment. Nor does the drive stop here. Harry Lutgens, director of the State Department of Institutions, reports that some thirty Filipino inmates of State Hospitals, will be turned over to the Bureau of Immigration for deportation. As "aliens," they are no longer entitled to hospitalization. It is doubtful indeed, if, in the long history of the cruelty of our vacillating immigration policy—now friendly—now harsh, we have treated any other race as unfairly as we have treated the Filipino.

SOME MONTHS AGO, William May Garland, millionaire property owner and "civic leader" of Los Angeles, appeared before the City Council and humbly petitioned for \$2,000.00 to pay his expenses, so that he might carry the official Olympic flag to the games in Berlin. Over vigorous protests from the floor, the Council finally capitulated and gave Mr. Garland his \$2,000. At the time, this action seemed indefensible enough. Among other aggravating circumstances was the fact that the German consulate in Los Angeles has long been housed in the W. M. Garland Building, and word had been received that Garland was to be given an L.L.D. at the University of Heidelberg celebration in compensation for his ardent fight for American participation in the Olympic Games. But word recently received from Germany, in the form of a long special story by Sylvia Weaver, appearing in the society section of the *Los Angeles Times*, cinches the case against Garland. Miss Weaver's account is long, rapturous, fawning, nonsensical, but a few of its highlights can be detailed. It seems that at the "lovely garden festival given by Reichsminister and Frau Goering at their villa in Berlin-Dahlem," Mrs. W. M. Garland appeared "lovely in a burgundy and blue print chiffon with a large burgundy hat and a blue fox cape." There followed parties at Babelsberg Castle, at the home of Reichsminister Dr. Goebbels, and the Duke of Coburg. At all these gay affairs, presented by the leaders of a regime responsible for the death of 10,000 "political enemies" in Germany since 1933—"Dr." and Mrs. W. M. Garland, their transportation paid by the tax-payers of the City of Los Angeles, flitted

gaily about, two aged, twittering, society-crazed Americans. Nor were they alone. According to the story by Miss Weaver, hundreds of wealthy Californians flocked to Berlin—Mr. and Mrs. Thos. Ridgway, (Ridgway a former President of the State Bar of California), Harrison Chandler (son of Harry Chandler), Douglas Fairbanks, Mrs. Chauncey Clarke, the Harvey S. Mudds, the Owen Churchills, all were there, fawning upon Goebbels and Goering, hobnobbing with murderers, war-plotters, and anti-Semites. To these leading citizens—so-called—of Southern California, there was apparently nothing improper in publicly bestowing their approval upon the Nazi regime, signed by their presence at Nazi functions, and the acceptance of hospitality from Nazi leaders. At a party given by Dr. Goebbels, the California guests walked to Peacock Island across a bridge built by "the German army." The "bridge was a mass of Olympic and national flags and the lake and the sky were equally blue as night closed in on the party. Music filled the air constantly—and nothing is more divine than German music. Lovely blonde German girls in white satin page costumes lined the way through bowers of flowers until we came to the dream castle. The butterfly bar, completely covered with lighted butterflies, was a gay scene the whole evening as the champagne bottles popped." Indeed, a charming scene, specially concocted to fool a gullible, and none too scrupulous, collection of Americans.

SEATTLE DOES WITHOUT HEARST

THE CURTAIN has been rung up on the second, but probably not the last act in the Seattle Post-Intelligencer strike drama, which at times has verged upon the farcical. The case is now being heard before National Labor Relations Board Trial Examiner, Edwin S. Smith, whose sympathies seem to be largely with the striking Guildsmen, much to the dissatisfaction of Hearstman Edward G. Woods, handling the case for the P.I. Woods has announced that any decision unfavorable to the Hearst interests would not be recognized, but fought out in court, for which contingency careful preparation is being made. The P.I., whose presses have been quiet for a month, has announced they will not resume publication of the paper until they can do so "without let or hindrance," which means, of course, until the striking Guildsmen crawl back on their bellies, asking for reinstatement, which won't happen. Meanwhile, Seattle is struggling along in its bereavement about as well as could be expected, which is pretty good.

The strike, since its beginning on August 14th, has been marked by a number of interesting features. Appropriately enough, perhaps, it has been fought mainly in the newspapers and over the radio. After a day of silence on the subject, following the suspension of the Post-Intelligencer, its sisters under the skin, the reactionary Times and pseudo-liberal Star came out with the usual lamentations about "freedom of the press." On the other hand, the Guild Daily, read every morning by about 20,000 citizens, and an excellent antidote for P.I. poison, has been holding up its end pretty well. Since then, however, the Star has sensed the tenor of public opinion and has made a show of impartiality, although during the N. R. L. B. hearings it is refusing to publish in its news columns any statements from either side, while at the same time accepting full page ads from the Washington Industrial Council in favor of Hearst.

In a valiant attempt to win public favor lieutenants of America's high priest of fascism have almost hourly for the

past month on several radio stations expressed much righteous but highly paid indignation over such crimes and criminals as "suppression of free speech," "force and violence," "radical labor racketeers," and "shrieking, howling mobs." These phrases, born almost entirely in the imaginations of the commentators, have been repeated so often that they've lost their charm. Practically the only violence that has taken place is that done to the ear drums of the listeners by this barrage of verbiage. The Guild spokesmen, without as great a radio fund, have made up in logic and intelligence what has been lost by lack of repetition.

The P.I. speakers have frequently reiterated the right of the Hearst agents to fire Everhardt Armstrong, dramatic critic, and Frank (Slim) Lynch, veteran photographer, for whose reinstatement the Guild is striking. The Hearst manager emphatically avers that they were fired for insubordination and incompetency, respectively. Both were employees of many years standing on the paper. Why this discovery of incompetency and insubordination coincided so closely with the discovery of their Guild activity is a question to which no answer has been satisfactorily made. Perhaps Trial Examiner Smith will ferret out the solution.

The complaint about "shrieking, howling mobs" may be taken seriously in other parts of the country, but in Seattle it is just humorous. In the early days of the strike an examination of the picketers with and without banners of their organizations would reveal trade unionists, ministers, students, lawyers, doctors, professors, teachers, politicians, men, women, boys and even dogs with placards. Never was there a more dignified or decorous picket line. The writer walked it many times and never a shriek or howl was ever heard. Even the reactionary but politically conscious Mayor Dore announced in an enthusiastic speech at a large mass meeting that it would be a good thing for Seattle if the P.I. was never published again. Meanwhile, the first excitement has died down. The Guild Daily appears more as a newspaper than a strike organ; financial and moral support continues to come to the Guildsmen; even the Times has resigned itself to an increased circulation. Only a couple of pickets walk the line, but that seems sufficient.

A. SUMNER THOMPSON

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ORGANIZED LABOR ANSWERS THE M. AND M.

THE Open Shop has been credited (by the Chamber of Commerce) with the growth of Los Angeles as an industrial center. The gentlemen who believe so thoroughly in "industrial freedom" have sung the praises of our Open Shop to employers all over the country, urging them to leave their agitator-ridden cities and come to the open shop paradise—Los Angeles. Since the shameless betrayal of the McNamaras by the Los Angeles Times and its "constituents," union organization in Los Angeles has been supposedly non-existent.

What a surprise the Merchants and Manufacturers Association must have received on Labor Day. Two weeks before, through advertisements in all the local newspapers, the M. and M. had proudly announced its platform "to aid industry and promote business." It told us, in one full-page breath, that it recognized "the principle of collective bargaining between an employer and his employee," that labor must have "the right to employment freed of coercion or intimidation," and that the Association "contends for the 'open shop' in all the term implies." On Labor Day, the people of Los Angeles answered the Merchants and Manufacturers Association. In the largest, most enthusiastic, and most impressive Labor Day Parade in local history, organized labor turned out, 30,000 strong, to march down Broadway for two miles, from Washington Boulevard to the City Hall, while a crowd, estimated at 100,000, cheered the marchers.

Los Angeles has a far-flung assortment of laborers. There is first, the motion-picture industry, employing, besides actors, directors, and other professional workers, large numbers of carpenters, electricians, and other craftsmen; there is a sizeable clothing industry; there is a growing furniture industry; there is still the remains of a building boom; and there is the harbor, with its militant army of longshoremen, sailors, and marine workers. All of these were represented in the colorful parade. Garment workers marched with carpenters and electricians, with furniture workers, with printers and bookbinders, with molders and hod-carriers, house movers and cameramen, motion picture actors and longshoremen, bartenders, elevator constructors, garbage collectors, and engineers. The I. L. G. W. U. band created a sensation with the rendition of the "Internationale"—right in the center of the M. and M.'s own city! The members of this militant union aggravated the anger Red-Squad Hynes and his henchmen must have felt, by chanting for almost the entire length of the parade *Free Tom Mooney!*

Most of the marching delegations paid their "respect" to Mr. Hearst by timely Bronx cheers as they passed the *Examiner* building.

Significant was the fact that most applause was given by the onlookers to the militant maritime unions, to the small group representing the office workers, and to the local of the American Federation of Teachers. The latter group was applauded repeatedly, the crowds demonstrating their satisfaction with *Hurrah for the Teachers!*

The M. and M. should be worried. In one of the country's last strongholds of the open shop, labor has demonstrated its strength, and its unity. It will take more than full-page advertisements to stop this growing force from introducing a few elements of the M. and M.'s own program into Los Angeles industry: "decent working conditions," "good wages," "collective bargaining." And perhaps eventually they may even succeed in bringing to American industry a semblance of that primary American principle—Democracy.

BROWDER COMES TO DETROIT

RANK SABOTAGE, I calls it. The very day, and the train bringing Browder is thirty-five minutes late!

On one side of the station entrance are a horde of Redcaps, the other doorway is flanked with cops. Car after car drives up with Browder banners, all except the driver get out, leaving him to park the car. Inside there is a large crowd, some of them evidently bound for somewhere, the majority awaiting Browder. The reception committee have brought noise-makers; the official welcoming committee wear small strips of red ribbon, with the word "committee" stamped on them. The day is warm. Everyone expresses a hope it will be warm and clear tomorrow, picnic day. Big day for Detroit, first chance to see and hear Earl Browder, the man whom the entire nation talks about. What kind of man can he be that so many turn out to meet him at the train?

More and more aged jalopies deposit workers at the depot, pull away with the Browder banner fluttering on the rear. Inside the impatient crowd mills about the spacious interior. The unsuspecting travellers glance about at everyone, the cops try to appear unconcerned—even the plain clothes dicks don't know what to do with their hands. The outline of their holsters is plain through their coat. Why do dicks wear plain clothes when they have a police station map all over their face, hands, and body?

The welcoming committee brings out a huge banner ready to string it across the line of march of Browder and his party. The train is due, the banner is unfurled and held aloft by five workers. All eyes turn toward the ramp, the cops select strategic positions, the travellers crane necks anxiously and the entire welcoming crowd gets set . . . where is he? Dammit . . . other people have come up from the same train . . . where is Browder? Again I accuse the Michigan Central of rank sabotage . . . wilfull discrimination.

The cops are moving forward . . . so is the crowd . . . the dicks begin to mingle in the crowd passing out a hard stare to those wearing red ribbons. What the hell? No Browder? How come? A large crowd of workers begin to climb the ramp, the crowd surges forward, the cops strive to preserve order. The cops are too few, it would take twice their number to hold back that crowd. A voice yells "here's Browder" and the noise breaks, swells and roars through the entire depot as terrified travellers grab baggage and prepare to flee—anywhere. Their first fears dispelled, they too press forward to see what kind of man can draw such a welcome. I want to see him too. The crowd pushes and shoves, mills and turns as the noise reaches tremendous proportions. The station makes an ideal place to carry sound. There are a thousand cheering, yelling, screaming, men, women and children. A young kid near me cracks my eardrum by his shrill whistle. Jesus! that kid would give a locomotive whistle a hard battle!

The crowd of workers surround a small, sturdy figure. I can just see the familiar Browder smile, the typical American moustache, the intelligent forehead, over a sea of cops, workers and photographers who are snapping their flashlight cameras continuously. Not for nothing are they present. Before them is a man of national reputation, a man whom workers all up and down the land admire, a man whose words on the radio are heard in homes where the radio is barely one jump from repossession. This, then, is Browder.

The huge banner stretches across the front door of the station as the cops and workers escort him to the waiting car in the parade to his hotel. At the door, Will Weinstone, able

Detroit leader, takes charge. From the running board of a car he issues orders to the sound truck which, in turn, broadcasts them to the cars waiting to take their places in the parade. For a few moments Browder is the center of all eyes as he stands blinking and smiling in the sun. Strangely enough, there is a look of respect from the cops; the dicks edge in closer to have their look while all about him the crowd yells, throws streamers, and two workers load bunches of flowers into the car. The sound truck is playing the Internationale, the crowd scatters to follow it as the Browder car pulls out from the station, two motorcycle cops in the lead.

Everyone blows their horns, people on the street gape and

stare, street car passengers crane from windows and workers grin, wave their hands or caps, some even raise the right clinched fist. Again on the running board of a car is Will Weinstone, directing the parade, waving to cars and handling everything smoothly, efficiently. Here today was ample proof that the reds, as they call them, know their stuff when it comes to demonstrations, crowds, parades and movements of large forces through cities.

At the hotel the sound track stops, the Internationale blares, the picnic is announced. Browder leaves his car, waves at the crowd and enters his hotel.

PHIL McCANN

ROUT AT SACRAMENTO

I. ERNEST ALBEE

THE thirty-seventh annual convention of the California State Federation of Labor, held at Sacramento September 14th to 19th, might have been staged by a professional magician, so numerous and surprising were the rabbits pulled out of its hat. That the rabbits, in the form of resolutions, officers elected, and general sentiments were progressive provided the element of surprise, and old-timers at the convention agreed that the solidarity, the unanimity of progressiveness, was the most amazing phenomenon of all.

As a first-timer I asked the old-timers how and why this had happened, and their generalized answer is this—that for the first time labor has recognized a common enemy, a common offensive alliance against all labor, in such apparently distinct entities as "The Boss," Morgan, Hearst, Hitler, War, Unemployment, and Starvation; consequently professional and industrial workers together have now moved toward the formation of a united front against the united enemy.

What else can be concluded from the fact the three new "white-collar" unions, the Teachers' Federation, Screen Actors' Guild, and Newspaper Guild, appeared at the convention this year for the first time and acted in concert with the Teamsters, Warehousemen, the Fruit and Vegetable Workers, Butchers, Bakers, and Machinists?

How, otherwise, could resolutions in support of the C.I.O., resolutions inveighing against Red-baiting, Fascism, the Criminal-Syndicalism law, against vigilantism; a host of resolutions more "radical" than these, be passed and adopted almost without dissent even from delegates and officers known in the past as "reactionaries?"

Sacramento was hot last week, but what made it hotter was the strike situation in Salinas. It may well be that this event turned the convention further to the left than it would otherwise have gone. Salinas demanded action, and immediate action. Salinas was a sword of Damocles suspended over the heads of passive and conservative delegates. On the first convention day telegrams began to arrive, sounding increasingly a note of desperation:

"We are being blasted out of our labor temple with gas shells."

"Two babies dying from effects of gas. Eighty-year-old woman taken to hospital. Gas."

"Gangs of armed strikebreakers roaming streets insulting our wives and sisters. Two union men kidnapped. Help us."

Delegates became restive, the routine business of the day found them irritably uninterested. By the second day men

were likely to jump to their feet at any moment and cry "What about Salinas? We've got to do something!" When A. F. of L. organizer Joe Casey came into the hall fresh from the hot spot and levelled a screaming, sobbing blast of Celtic oratory against vigilante "Justice" in Salinas the smouldering resentment burst into flames. Kasper Bauer, twenty-five years a labor leader and a man respected even by opponents for his profound humanitarianism, called for an immediate general strike throughout Salinas Valley. The conservatives were scared, and though they avoided Bauer's demand they appointed a committee to leave at once for the strike area "to see if things were really as bad as rumored." A committee sent to the Governor had already returned with an innocuous message, saying "they had been received very graciously"—and that the Governor had promised to "look into" this and that. Possibly some of the executive officials of the Federation hoped for a similar report from Salinas; instead the committee came back on the third day to set the convention by the ears!

The delegates heard that the Grower-Shippers had refused all proposals of arbitration, and that they were allied with vigilante groups and scores of highway patrol officers who had accepted private employment from the growers without any semblance of legality; they heard that mobs of strikebreakers armed with axe-handles, clubs, revolvers and rifles, were roaming the streets insulting women, threatening innocent bystanders as well as strikers, and trying admittedly to foment open strife. One policeman let this out of the bag when he said to a picket: "Why the hell don't you start something so I can fill you full of lead?" Filipinos were being forced to pick lettuce at gun point. Two supposed leaders had been kidnapped, and at that time nothing more had been heard of them. (It is now known that they were kidnapped and beaten by State Highway Police.)

Delegates began to speak of "revolution" and "civil war" as new telegraph reports came in; and as they left the hall on the third day, having demanded an extra night session for the Salinas situation, they saw the newspaper reports containing the Salinas Sheriff's command that all able-bodied citizens of Monterey County present themselves to be deputized under penalty of imprisonment!

At the extra session it was resolved to designate all vegetables originating in the Salinas Valley as "hot cargo," and to enjoin all union labor to "let it rot in the trucks or the railroad cars." The Railway Brotherhood was to be petitioned to refuse handling lettuce cars. The State Federation of Labor

SEPTEMBER 28, 1936

was to insist that Governor Merriam force his underlings, such as Chief Raymond E. Cato of the State Highway Police, either to obey State and local laws or give up their badges. It was resolved that the Federation endorse and work for the recall movement against the Governor if he continued to show unwillingness to take any action, and all delegates carried out their vote to march around the Capitol building in protest against his inactivity. One proposition, that the convention adjourn for the purpose of re-convening in Salinas itself for a show of strength, was turned down although at the height of the excitement it came perilously close to passing.

Most of these resolutions were long-term plans which, some pointed out, would in all probability take effect only after the lettuce workers had been clubbed and shot into submission. Kasper Bauer pointed out how easy it was for the delegates to take a leisurely jaunt around the handsome Capitol grounds, and wondered whether their enthusiasm would express itself financially. With considerable support he got over his demand for contributions; the sum collected among the delegates was nearly eight hundred dollars. But the Screen Actors' Guild came in for cheers. Led off by Gary Cooper with a contribution of \$200 the actors raised over a thousand dollars in a few hours, and were continuing their collection.

The threat of recall against the Governor took effect, for he, having slipped quietly out of town after "graciously receiving" the first committee, now raced back to Sacramento, where a new committee sent over to demand immediate executive action found him a very different frame of mind. He agreed to appoint a committee selected from among the Federation, the Fruit and Vegetable Workers, and the Grower-Shippers, with himself included as arbitrator, to go to Salinas immediately. The Governor asked for a definition of the "preferential hiring clause" claimed by the Grower-Shippers to have been the only obstacle to agreement. When told that it did not mean the closed shop, but only that no non-union labor would be hired until the union labor market was exhausted, the Governor said, as quoted by a committee member:

"Well, if that is what you mean by preferential hiring I don't see what the hell the growers are kicking about!"

II JOHN BOND

The progressives come to the State Federation of Labor convention at Sacramento this year with candidates, but no real hope of electing them. George Kidwell, delegate from the San Francisco Bakery Wagon Drivers, brought the I.L.A. and Teamsters together, with the result that two progressive vice presidents, Harry Bridges and Walter Mahaffey of the Stockton I.L.A., are now part of the Federation Executive Board.

Entering the Teamster caucus, Kidwell found that the slate agreed upon included no progressive candidates.Appealed for a reconsideration of their action, the Teamster caucus, by a secret ballot of 34 to 5 dumped one of their earlier selections for vice president and placed Harry Bridges on their ticket. In turn, the progressives agreed that if on the last ballot John Shoemaker, their presidential candidate, was eliminated, he would throw his support to the teamsters' candidate.

And that's the way it worked out. The 12,000 votes controlled by the teamsters elected Bridges; without that support he would have landed in fifth place on a ballot declaring the top four the winners. Mahaffey got in with the help of the teamsters. Shoemaker, who, on the last ballot, polled over

24,000 votes, was eliminated in the race for president and threw his support to the teamsters' candidate, James Hopkins. In the face of this support, Hopkins' opposition, J. W. Buzzell, withdrew, leaving Hopkins president of the Federation.

Thus, the progressives tore in and played the good old game of politics, with not sacrifice in principle, and with positive gains. They elected 2 vice presidents, and what is perhaps more important, made an open alliance with the teamsters. They launched a political tieup with the teamsters that unquestionably will be carried over into the economic field more openly and effectively than it has in the past.

The business of the convention included the consideration of 194 resolutions on every subject ranging from prohibiting state highway police acting in moving pictures at a low wage to the freeing of all prisoners convicted under the Criminal Syndicalism Act.

The convention, amidst great jubilation, endorsed the candidacy of Franklin D. Roosevelt. Then it proceeded to quash a move for a third party on the ground that having endorsed F. D. R., the Federation's full support should be behind him. This was the only major defeat of the progressives; the reasoning of the resolutions committee recommending non-concurrence for a third party appealing to the logic of the delegates.

On support for the C.I.O., a caucus of some 200 delegates adopted a single program instructing the Federation's delegate to the A. F. of L. convention, George Kidwell, to vote and make every effort on behalf of the suspended unions. This program, accompanied by a great demonstration, was unanimously adopted by the convention.

Again the convention reiterated its belief in the innocence of Tom Mooney and Warren K. Billings, and provided that defense funds be handled through the Federation's Executive Board. This latter move was made at the personal request of Mooney.

On agricultural labor, the convention is pledged to begin immediately statewide organization of field and plant workers. The Federation will seek an International charter for agricultural workers from the A. F. of L. In addition, the convention raised the per capita dues to the Federation one cent per member, such additional funds to be used solely for the purpose of organizing the unorganized. The present membership of the Federation is 135,000, an increase of 33,000 members since 1935. On the basis of the present membership therefore, there will be available \$1350 per month for organizational work.

The Federation endorsed the Longshoremen's position in their present controversy with their employers. The convention approved the right of the I.L.A. to support other maritime unions and to refuse to accept or arbitrate unreasonable demands of their employers. The Sailors Union of the Pacific was recognized as the only bona fide sailors' union on the coast, and continuous discharge books for seamen were disapproved. The organizational work of the Warehousemen's union was approved and complete support promised. A resolution favoring an embargo on all munitions, scrap iron and other war materials, and against shipping these materials to aggressor nations was adopted. The entire subject of the King, Ramsay, Connor case was referred to the incoming Executive Board.

Considering the Newspaper Guild, the convention endorsed the Post-Intelligencer strike in Seattle; endorsed the collective bargaining efforts of the Northern California Newspaper Guild; provided that at future conventions only Guild

newsmen and photographers would be allowed in the convention.

The repeal of the C. S. law was called for by the convention, and the freeing of all persons convicted under the law was demanded.

Dealing with the questions of Vigilantism and Fascism, the convention condemned both. The wholesale fingerprinting of citizens was protested against. Legislation will be sought against the sale of tear gas bombs. The State Highway Patrol was censored, and efforts will be made through legislation to delimit their activities, and keep them out of industrial disputes. All affiliates of the Federation were called upon to set up defense committees against vigilantism and were urged to expel any member found to belong to any vigilante group.

A resolution calling for the freeing of Angelo Herndon was unanimously adopted.

By action of the delegates, the Federation condemned any war of aggression, and pledged itself to resist the entrance of the United States into war.

To better reach the public with its case, the unions were urged to use the radio, and moves were started looking toward a radio station to be owned and operated by the State Federation of Labor.

As matters of general policy the Federation endorsed the 30-hour week, and urged all unions to have all agreements affecting them and their allied crafts arrived at and terminated at the same time.

It was an amazing convention.

FORECAST FOR DIXIE

GEORGE ALBEE

A REVOLUTION is a phenomenon which lies at the edge of biologies and anthropologies, where a man, multiplied, actually becomes mankind and behaves like gas in a pressure tank or like water in a syphon.

Because we sentimentalize ourselves, perhaps because we fear to apply a mechanistic hypothesis to the race lest we be seduced into applying it to ourselves as individuals, we are a little reluctant still to manipulate humanity in terms of physical equations. Yet it is apparent that Lenin, to name one pioneer in the new science, was solving something very like an equation in his head when he predicted the present revolt in Spain. He was not guessing; he knew well in advance that it was on its way. Is it possible that we may similarly predict if, when and where we shall have a revolution in the United States?

Revolutionary power to the physicist is no different from any other sort of power, and power equals mass multiplied by rate. The formula used by an electrical engineer is clearer —W equals AV. Wattage, or power, is equivalent to amperage, the quantity of current, multiplied by voltage, the pushing-force. It is a component, in other words, of two factors. Stating the factors in terms of humanity it would seem to follow that our American revolution will begin, if it begins, at whatever point on our continent the greatest numbers of persons are suffering the greatest misery. We cannot look ahead and say, "January 1st, 1938, will be the day," for we are dealing with a flux; but we can say that it will come at that place, and at whatever moment the resistance to our W becomes intense enough to transform W's potential energy into kinetic energy.

Where in the United States do we find the greatest number of people suffering the greatest misery?

The lumberjacks of the Northwest are exploited, but their life is not literally unbearable and they run to thousands rather than millions. The same holds true of the California orchard workers. Our farmers in the Dakotas are hard hit, but they have been relieved—it is curious that we use the word "relief," as though we were turning a valve and relieving pressure in a tank—and they total not more than two hundred families altogether. The slums of New York are fetid and black with hatred and despair, and three million people live in them. They come closest to fulfilling our conditions; but have we reached the end of our list? No... not while we have eight million and more sharecroppers in the South.

The plight of the sharecropper has been widely publicized. I will not rehearse it at too great length. Briefly, eight million human beings in the cotton and tobacco country are far gone in decadence. After half a century of oppression they are little better today than cretins. Hog fat, corn meal and molasses make a banquet for them. They live in hovels, in their own filth. There are men who have never in their lives owned a suit of clothes or a pair of shoes; there are babies dressed in flour sacks who suck at the teats of gaunt hound bitches because their mothers' breasts are dry. The schools are closed. Their religion is barbaric. Their notion of a day's amusement is to watch a hanging. Overseers whip, black-list, burn and shoot them. And now at last a mechanical cotton-picker threatens to drive hundreds upon hundreds of thousands of them from the fields. I have met and talked with the Rust brothers, the inventors of the new machine. In all sincerity they hope to cushion the shock of its advent; but they are intelligent men, they know that labor-saving is better than labor, and I suspect that they do not keenly regret the straw which they are laying across the camel's back. Their tractor-drawn picker, despite a brilliant suggestion from Mississippi that it be sunk in a river, is here to stay. Already, in crude form, it can gather as much cotton in an hour as a field hand can gather in four days. A stay of grace, if you choose to call it that, may be granted to the tenant farmers in the tobacco fields, but those who work in the cotton have come to the end.

And cotton is the chief crop on a fourth of all American farms. Cotton is our leading cash crop. Cotton and cotton seed together account for a quarter of our total national farm income.

It is not surprising, all this being true, that interest in the Bankhead-Jones bill has suddenly revived in Washington. Last year Senator John Bankhead of Alabama and Representative Marvin Jones of Texas proposed the establishment of a Farmers' Home Corporation to buy land from landlords and sell it to the tenants on a sixty-year repayment plan. Their proposal died in the Senate. Light now dawns upon the Senatorial gentlemen, however, and they are changing their tune. The name of the new tune, I rather imagine, is "Whistling in the Dark." Be that as it may, a somewhat less forthright measure, modelled upon the Irish land laws and committing the Government to huge purchases of landlord property for resale to the sharecroppers, was approved by the

SEPTEMBER 28, 1936

President on September 11th. He will include it in his legislative program for the next Congress.

This is patchwork again, of course; one more piece of tin nailed over a straining seam in the accidental civilization which we call traditional. Again it is relief, not cure. But it is of especial interest to us because the seam here, in the South, obviously is gaping so widely. Eight million people are quite enough to sink the obsolete, creaking old ship without help. This is a major test. The sharecroppers will tell us whether, as Liberals hope, we will be able to accomplish with book-keeping in America what other nations have been able to accomplish only with blood.

What Roosevelt proposes to do in essence is to let us pay the Southern capitalists to quit being capitalists, and then take as much of their money back from them as we can get through income-taxation. The tenant farmers will become petty capitalists. Whether, a decade hence, we shall find them preying upon each other as they themselves are preyed upon

today, or whether the capitalists of today will simply turn middle-men and keep the ascendancy over the small growers which they now have, cannot be said. But it is undeniable that the A and V of our equation have been decreased for the moment. Relief is to be afforded. The safety-valve has been turned—and none too soon!

The outlook in the South appears to be this. A crucial situation exists, involving eight million Americans who, if they, are not aided and encouraged to organize at once, see no hope ahead of them outside of Government aid. The Presidents we elect in 1936, 1940 and possibly 1944 will have to deal with that situation. If they are benign Roosevelts they will take successive, expedient steps to ameliorate it. The flare will be postponed. If, on the other hand, they are Kansas innocents, who do not know enough to be frightened, they will begrudge taking steps—and the flare will come a trifle earlier. Barring a sudden coalescence into a Popular Front, I believe the South is the place which will most bear watching.

THE CITY DIFFERENT

A Study of Santa Fe

MR. AND MRS.—shall we say Jones?—from Denver, perhaps, were perfectly enchanted with Santa Fe. They had never dreamed that such a quaint old-world atmosphere existed in America, right in the United States, in fact. Now on the last day of their visit they wished they had planned to stay a little longer. Thanks to the comfortable tours in a smooth tan Packard arranged by the hotel, they had seen everything in "The Most Wonderful 50 Square Miles in America"—bare, sunbaked Indian pueblos where they had bought pottery from fat uncommunicative waddling squaws holding sore-eyed babies, for practically nothing, my dear! Bare sunbaked villages where lived the Penitentes—looking disappointingly like the other Spanish "natives"; and even the prehistoric cliff dwellings with their dangerous ladders. It was all just too fascinating.

Intoxicated to the point of recklessness by these adventures, Mr. and Mrs. Jones decided to do a little amateur sightseeing this last morning. They walked away from the paved streets and turned into a narrow dirt road, past crumbling adobe walls surrounding gardens, past adobe houses as crumbling as the walls where dark-eyed, dark-skinned children in ragged clothes swarmed shrill in the bare, hard-packed dirt, among chickens and droopy mangy dogs with protruding ribs. If certain heavy odors hung rather persistently in the thin golden air, if certain toppling little structures with warped doors hanging half-open stood too shamelessly in front of these quaint houses, instead of behind them, Mr. and Mrs. Jones only remarked that it was just too fascinating to hear Spanish everywhere, even the babies—They paused to admire the picture formed by a thin chinless woman hauling a creaking bucket from a well. "It might be a hundred years ago!" the Jones' sighed thoughtfully, savoring the picturesque sight of the stoop-shouldered girl heavily carrying her full bucket into the tiny house, on the back door of which—the Joneses could not see—the Health Department had tacked a quarantine notice. Typhoid.

"It's getting hot, shall we turn back?" suggested Mr. Jones. "Oh, let's go a little farther." Mrs. Jones had caught sight of a perfectly fascinating group of old women with black shawls

MIRIAM TOLLER

over their heads, hurrying on crooked painful legs, claw-like hands holding the shawls tight under grey faces, marked deeply with lines of defeat. "What a picture!" murmured Mrs. Jones, as the old women slipped like shabby ghosts through a dark door. "What a picture!" she cried once more, as she and Mr. Jones stepped cautiously to the side of the road, crowding against a dusty prickly bush to let a wagon pass. Such a wagon, it was too good to be true! The wheels, patched with rope and wire, turned drunkenly on bent axles; the horses walked with meek weary indifference to their dirty sores and broken knees, pulling their load of scrap wood on top of which sat the driver, a thin boy whose sore-covered face did not lose its sullenness as he softly said "good morning" to the delighted Joneses, and slapped the rope reins across the numb backs of his teetering team.



One more picture to climax this perfect morning. On a bench in front of an adobe house sat a gaunt grey-haired man, peacefully smoking his pipe, at his side his placid sweet-faced wife, calmly knitting. The old man's high thin nose, his long slender hands clasped about his knees were clear evidence of his noble Spanish descent. A picture of contentment and simple peace. "Ah," sighed Mrs. Jones, "how wise these people are, content with so little, I almost envy them, you know. Nothing to worry them, they can sit quietly in the sun, thinking over a long worthwhile life. The machine age destroys so much, doesn't it?" Mr. Jones took off his hat and wiped the perspiration from his bald head.

The old man's pipe had long since gone out but he had no more tobacco. His teeth clamped tight together on the stem as he thought: "No! I, Jose Dolores Roybal, will not pull a plow. That is beyond everything. They take away everything from a man, those relief buzzards, but I am a man, not a

donkey. So we will starve to death, they think. That is better, to die a man. Two days now, nothing to eat. How long will it take to die." His wife's busy fingers made the needles flash in the sun. "At the end of the week, those ladies said, at the end of the week when you bring back all this wool knitted properly we will pay you, they said, we will pay you four dollars. The Inglo lady who knits for them, they pay her five. But can we live, for seven days on tea? And that lady I worked for all last week, she will pay me two dollars, she told me. Six dollars next week. But what is there to eat, now, today? I am so sorry, that lady told me, I haven't any change just now. Come next week, she says. And I cleaned her house, ironed her clothes, made everything beautiful, but she says, come next week and I will pay you. Then I will be too weak, maybe, to walk so far for two dollars. Already my stomach makes my head dizzy. Oh, Holy Virgin Mary—there, I dropped a stitch!"

UP THE LADDER OF SUCCESS

A Note on the Problem of Achievement

F. J. S.

RECENT outbursts of Alfred E. Smith and John J. Raskob to the myth that American society imposes no obstacles to a poor boy with talent rising to a position of eminence in business or the professions. Indeed, this manner of reasoning about the conditions of achievement has been developed so far that it is now confidently asserted by people who should know better that there is a rough justice in achievement as shown by the correlation between social rank and eminence.

If change from one occupation to another within the same occupational classification—from farm laborer to cannery worker—is considered as evidence of mobility, then, perhaps, America can be called the land of opportunity. There is at the present time, and there has always been, a great deal of changing from one occupation to another in the same classification in this country. In this sense our society has been free from the restraints which keep a son tied to the identical occupation as the father such as occurs in caste organization of society; but if we mean by opportunity to rise from a lower to a higher occupation—from carpenter to physician—then there has been as much social climbing as might have been looked for, judged from the pioneer character of the country up to almost the beginning of the present century. And when such changes occurred they were generally into the next higher group of occupations; only infrequently has the top of the ladder been reached in a single leap. A common laborer's son became a craftsman, and his son in turn a merchant, and the merchant's son a lawyer, physician, or clergyman. The climb up the social ladder has been a step at a time in America; this has been the rule not the exception.

Assuming these observations to be correct, it follows quite naturally that the correlations between native endowment and achievement cannot be very close, unless, of course, we adopt the view of the eugenist and argue that social classes are analogous to breeds and varieties in the animal and plant world, and that each class in consequence is biologically adapted to the economic and social level which it occupies. A consideration of such data as are available on the social distribution of talent in the population shows that social

classes are not biological existences, and that the number of distinguished persons produced by any social class or occupational group is due to social causes. This does not mean that there is achievement without ability, but only that the number of distinguished men a group may produce is not a measure of the number of great men that a class or group could produce under different circumstances. Neither is it necessary, when taking this stand, to deny that there may be absolutely more native ability present among the upper classes as intelligence tests appear to show; although it is doubtful if intelligence tests as now made up measure more than the extent to which class or occupational groups participate in the common social heritage.

The professional class produces a far greater number of famous men than would be expected from the amount of native talent available in the group as measured by present devices. Taking the data supplied by Professor Terman of Stanford University on the social distribution of gifted children in the population and comparing these with the data on the occupations of the fathers of men mentioned in *Who's Who in America* for 1922-23, we find that the professions produced two times as many famous men as gifted children. If we single out the most outstanding group in the professions for its capacity to produce famous men—the church—and make a similar comparison, we find the excess of actual over expected achievement to be greater than for the professions as a whole. The opportunities present in the environment of a clergyman's son so far out-weigh the matter of brains that the ratio of fame to talent is 3 to 1, that is, for every talented person who achieved fame there were also two relatively mediocre persons who achieved corresponding success.

The ratio of fame to talent for the business group is about the same as for the professions. This was to be anticipated, for in the United States success in business has always been highly esteemed. But when we come to the crafts-labor group the picture is reversed. Instead of fame exceeding talent, or even balancing it, we find that talent exceeds fame. For every person who achieves eminence there are two equally gifted

SEPTEMBER 28, 1936

persons who remain in obscurity. It is difficult to separate skilled from unskilled labor, but if the attempt be permitted, the figures obtained show a ratio of fame to talent of around 1 out of 10, or, for every skilled laborer's son who becomes famous enough to be listed in Who's Who,⁹ who are equally gifted are not. Thus the misfortune of having been born the son of a common laborer condemns 9 gifted persons to undistinguished toil, whereas the good fortune of having been born the son of a clergyman provides the opportunities for two persons without any exceptional gifts to attain a level of accomplishment worthy of public record!

Historically considered, the problem here raised of the opportunity of a poor boy to rise to the top, providing only that he has "the brains," leads to the same conclusion. A social or occupational group is a privileged body: it entails certain "rights" and opportunities. Thus so soon as an activity becomes established in a community—say engineering—steps are taken by those within the fold to close it to outsiders; that is, professional standards are set up. As a result, it is only during periods of rapid expansion in a profession that an intruder has a chance of breaking in. Again, before the establishment of an activity on a professional level it is open to all whose talents incline them in that direction, requiring as it then does little more than a natural bent of mind and a few empirical rules. And again, it is just these pioneer activities

which are usually shunned by the well-to-do and established classes.

These are some of the reasons why during the periods of great achievement in the past—the Renaissance, Reformation, and the Age of Revolution—the lower classes always produced a proportionately larger number of distinguished persons and why during periods of declining achievement the number always falls. In periods of expanding opportunity the need for talent exceeds the number which the upper classes can supply, thus opening the gates to outsiders of talent. Likewise, it is always during such times of rapid change that new activities appear which, because of their upstart character, are avoided by individuals with status, and in this way are made accessible to those who have everything to gain by the adventure and nothing to lose should it fail.

By way of conclusion, it may be pointed out that the tragedy of waste which has been described as the distinctive feature of American civilization in the utilization of its natural resources also characterizes the use which has been made of existing human talent. For every steel magnate, oil king, and motor baron that the United States has produced by the method of hardship and adversity, struggle and survival, the community has spent millions in the construction and maintenance of reformatories and prisons, and added millions in salaries to G-men to fill them.

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HOLLYWOOD WEEK

LOUIS NORDEN

FILMS, FOREIGN AND DOMESTIC: Following the completion of "Rembrandt" for Korda's London Films, Charles Laughton will star in "I-Claudius" before coming here to appear with Norma Shearer in "Marie Antoinette". . . Tess Slesinger's story, "Times So Unsettled Are," from her book, "Time, The Present," will be filmed by Paramount . . . Warner Brothers have changed the title of "Danton, the Terror of France," soon to be directed by Max Reinhardt. Now working on the script are Sheridan Gibney ("Anthony Adverse"), Gottfried Reinhardt, Michael G. Verber and F. von Mendelssohn . . . The title of Columbia's dramatization of Black Legion activities has been changed from "Hooded Legion" to "Legion of Terror." Bruce Cabot and Marguerite Churchill head the cast. Also being filmed is Warner's "Black Legion," Archie Mayo directing, in which the actual anti-Jew, anti-Catholic, anti-Labor oath of the Legion will be given prominence.

OUT OF GERMANY: A musical show was playing to small houses in Berlin. In a big advertising campaign, the producers raved about a mysterious new act which was going into the production. In the ads was an offer of 500 marks to any patron who would write, for publication, his disapproval of this mysterious, new feature. The theater was packed on the next evening. The act was the unveiling on the stage of a life-size portrait of Hitler.

As was predicted several weeks ago, German stars are protesting the cut in their salaries ordered by the Berlin Film Credit Bank on the advice of the Reichsfilmkammer. Camilla Horn, with a \$12,500 per picture contract, has already begun a court action to enforce its payment against the bank's edict of a cut to \$3,200. The cut came as the result of demands to

the official agency by Tobis and Ufa to cut production costs, needed because of the decreased income from both the foreign and domestic film market. Other court actions are expected to follow with attempts being made finally to pass the cut on to film workers. Austrian film stars, too, are affected since the *Berlin Film Credit Bank* finances most of the Austrian productions, and the salary cut edict will hit Jan Kiepura (\$150,000 per picture) and Martha Eggerth (\$60,000 per picture). Since Austrian pictures fare better in the foreign market, however, the need for the cut is not as urgent, though Austrian producers must still obey the order of their Nazi backers.

MUSIC: When sound recording and projection was invented, the theater musician faced a life-time of unemployment, unless, of course, the public would demand "live" orchestras in the theaters in place of recorded music.

This week, New York's musicians began the biggest employment drive in their history. Backed by organized labor and the picketing aid of the *American Federation of Actors* (vaudeville artists), Musicians Local 802 opened the campaign with a huge mass meeting at the Metropolitan Opera House. Directly thereafter, every important theater in the city was picketed by the musicians and their ally whom they had once helped to win better working conditions. A total of 5,000 were on the picket lines. In conjunction with the mass picketing, musicians were making a house-to-house canvas of all New York residents asking them to write, wire or telephone their local theaters asking for a return of the musician instead of "canned" music.

THE GUILD COMES TO LOS ANGELES: Several years ago, the American Newspaper Guild, then an embryonic organization, secured a few members in Los Angeles. The members were soon called into city editors' sanctums, told:

"I will never fire you for Guild activities. But misplaced commas, misspelled words or lateness are good excuses for hiring someone else in your place."

Since then the A.N.G. has grown, has joined the ranks of the A. F. of L., has won several important strikes, climaxed last week with the victory in Milwaukee. Now, with the loyal co-operation of Seattle labor, the Guild is winning a stunning victory in Seattle.

Newspaper men in Los Angeles, feeling the Guild's strength and, what is more, the growing strength of all Los Angeles labor behind the Guild, are showing interest once again in the Guild, and many have already become members. During the Seattle and Milwaukee strikes, for example, many newspaper men on local Hearst papers sent funds to the striking men on the Hearst papers in those cities.

This attempt at Guild organization will not end so abruptly. All labor is better organized to stand behind the Guild. Hearst knows this and the *Daily Variety* tells what Hearst is doing about it:

"Deep interest being shown by Hearst's *Examiner* in affairs of the American Legion is taken by many to indicate that Hearst may someday ask the Legion to support him. Hearst's newspapers are right now having serious labor troubles, particularly with editorial workers. The Guild won the terms demanded in its strike on the *Wisconsin News*, Hearst paper in Milwaukee, and has succeeded in closing down Hearst's *Seattle Post-Intelligencer*. Newspaper men in Los Angeles are showing interest in the Guild, many have secretly become members. *Examiner* is now carrying a column of American

Legion news daily under caption, 'Squads Right' by Walter Naughton."

ARBITRATION FAILS AGAIN: Two weeks ago, the Screen Actors' Guild filed suits against Hollywood major studios, in the names of some of its members, to collect sums owing on pay checks. The studios, under the NRA, had agreed to pay a minimum of \$25 a day to "bit" players or to "extras" speaking lines. When the NRA folded up, the studios through the Producers' Association had reaffirmed the principle of payment. But now, the studios were beginning to chisel.

Quickly the producers declared themselves to be against chiselling. The *Hollywood Reporter*, producers' voice, quickly said that the wage-cutting was being done by petty employees trying to make a hit in the front office by cutting expenses. But wage-cutting, it was affirmed, was being done without the producers' knowledge.

The studios, through the Hays office, agreed to abide by the ruling, to settle all past claims, to settle all future claims within 24 hours, and to set up a board to pass on any future "chiselling" with power to fire any employee found guilty.

This week, Columbia Pictures refused to abide by the agreement, decided to contest the suits, and filed answer to the claim of Victor DeCamp, claiming balance due between \$7.50 and \$25.00, the increase due to the fact that he had spoken dialogue in a scene. DeCamp's action contends that the Producers' Association resolution that NRA rules would be followed can legally be interpreted as contractual obligation. Though this was reaffirmed only last week, Columbia now alleges that the Producers' Association never made such a promise, and further that NRA extra rules never made such a guarantee.

Further does Columbia's action prove that the "chiselling" was not due to the uncontrolled actions of petty employees, but was due to the producers themselves.

The Screen Actors' Guild intends to file actions now against all major studios, will subpoena Producer Association's board and officials, and official records when the case comes to trial.

OUR CONTRIBUTORS

A. SUMNER THOMPSON is a newspaperman in Seattle. PHIL McCANN has just finished his book "America Breeds Criminals."

ERNEST ALBEE was teaching assistant in philosophy at U.C.L.A. He attended the California State Convention of Labor as a delegate from the American Federation of Teachers.

JOHN BOND is "Pacific Weekly's" regular Labor Editor.

GEORGE ALBEE has short stories in two anthologies. His first novel, "Not In A Day," was published by Knopf. A second novel will be published in England soon.

MIRIAM TOLLER is a California writer who has just spent some time in New Mexico.

F. J. S. are the initials of a professor of sociology in a Northern California university.

LAWRENCE BERNARD is a member of the writing staff on the Federal Theater project in Los Angeles and is author of the one-act play "Lars Killed His Son" recently published in "Today's Literature."

TOM KROMER, author of "Waiting for Nothing," the story of a tramp's life during the depression, is living at Albuquerque, New Mexico, and writing short stories.

SARA BARD FIELD, California poet, is author of "The Pale Woman" and other books of poetry. Her next book "Darkling Plain" will be published by Random House this Fall. Mrs. Field has been active in the American feminist and other social protest movements.

WILL WILLIAMS is a San Francisco newspaperman and critic present working his way around the world on a ship.

SEPTEMBER 28, 1936

RECOMMENDED READING: The September issue of *The Screen Guild Magazine*, for an excellent analysis of the "The A. F. of L. Squabble," impartially analyzing the philosophies behind the labor programs of John L. Lewis and William Green and the arguments for both industrial and craft unionism. No opinion is expressed which, to a great extent, is a reflection on the relationship existing between the Guild's board and its membership at large. At this stage, the Guild board should be able to express the opinion of its membership. This article, however, is an educational article which, if followed up by member forums and meetings, will do much toward crystallizing opinion and planning action.

Within the magazine, one page has the format of a miniature newspaper, called "The Labor World," appearing for the first time. It contains general national and foreign labor news, a section which will undoubtedly grow in succeeding issues.

The magazine also reproduces an editorial from the *Signalman's Journal* commenting on the Screen Guild magazine, but one of many such editorials and articles appearing in union publications all over the country. The letter is worth quoting:

"Last month we received our first copy of *The Screen Guild Magazine*, published by the Screen Actors Guild. Information in it contrasts strangely with the thing we are accustomed to hearing about movie people by way of the newspapers, radio and various magazines of the trade. Numerous articles in the Guild magazine about general labor questions and the movie workers' own problems indicate that men and women employed in the making of moving pictures are no different from the workers in other industries."

"MIRACLE AT VERDUN" NO MIRACLE

LAWRENCE BERNARD

"**M**IRACLE AT VERDUN" by Hans Chlunberg is still playing at the Experimental Theatre on Santa Monica Boulevard in Los Angeles. It is one of the most exciting plays the Federal Theatre has produced. And at the same time one of the least good.

Had the play been produced as a unity, with an attempt at simplicity, it would have accomplished its purpose. As it is, the small audience (Experimental Theatre seats only 150) was confused. Perhaps the playing script is confused, although one doubts that when the brilliant satire of Der Fuehrer (Hitler) and the French president is accomplished so deftly. I believe the direction was muddled in an attempt to provide a new technique.

Remodeled from a former garage, Experimental Theatre is not the place for staging a play like "Miracle at Verdun." It is too small, and the stage is so close upon the audience that one does not get the illusion of theatre. Noises deluge the helpless spectator from overhead, phonographs screech throughout the performance, scenes are shifted and properties brought on noisily in the deluded idea that this is a good imitation of Moscow Art Theatre productions. Scenes can be shifted in full view of the audience if it serves the purpose and form of the play, but not in "Miracle at Verdun."

There the noise and confusion disrupted the continuity and the mood established. Mr. Gering, the Experimental director, apparently was not interested enough in the audience, and tried for startling effects for themselves alone.

Briefly, the play tells of some tourists who visit a graveyard in Europe where lie the dead of the last World War. Chattering like geese the women and men walk out, and the stage grows dark upon a solitary figure who sits upon a tombstone and contemplates the past. Following scenes reveal soldiers rising out of their graves to complain of their bitter and horrible war experiences. Hungry for the warmth of the sun and the shelter of their homes, they march homeward. All France and Germany is aroused at their returning, this miracle at Verdun. The German Fuehrer (Hitler) wakes up in the middle of the night popping a revolver nervously in bed, until his mother comes in to quiet him and answer the ringing of the telephone.

"It's only some dead people," she tells him . . . "Pleasant dreams, son . . ."

Our Fuehrer turns on the gramophone to hear some record of himself talking to himself, and falls asleep.

Cut to the French president, in bed with his mistress, awakened to the ringing of a bell.

"What! The dead have risen? Impossible! Tell them to go back! We have no room for thirteen million dead in France!"

Speeches are made in the streets, extravagant promises, with the Fuehrer and the French president mouthing exactly similar words at opposite pulpits at extreme ends of the stage. Here is high satire, brilliant and devastating. "Miracle at Verdun" reaches a new high in grim comedy. It could have been a minor masterpiece, if it would have followed the satirical vein throughout. Instead it became throaty as Greta Garbo when the dead soldiers march through the fields trying to return to a world that would not have them, chanting, mumbling, lost in a fog, their purpose as confused as the members in the audience who were not projected into the drama.

At the high tribunal, men of science declare that the miracle is merely another manifestation of natural laws, which will be explained years later. Men of the church conclude that God is all-knowing, and that mere Man cannot fathom the purpose of His miracle. The generals cry out to the soldiers to return to their graves. And wearily, the soldiers return, disgusted with lies, tricks, threats, promises, voicing the same trite phrase . . . "the dirty dogs."

"Miracle at Verdun" tried to mix fantasy and realism. It tried too hard for "arty" effects, the dead soldiers moving as in a dream, talking in monotone . . . It should have had variety in the movements of the soldiers, as Benjamin Zemach so ably showed in his presentation of "Victory Ballet," a dance of the soldiers returning from their dead land. The mumbling grated on the audience's nerves, rather than stirred them.

The play dragged at the opening, the meaningless chants slowing the action. It came to life when the soldiers got up from their caskets and returned to the plane of the living. But when it switched to satire the tragic effect was lost again.

The actors worked hard and on the whole are to be commended. Lighting effects could have been improved. But the noises, the artificial mechanics of animals barking, braying, mooing, cocks crowing, phones ringing should have been reduced.

It is good to note that the high Federal price of one dollar has been reduced to forty cents, and with reduction of tickets for workers to twenty cents, all may see good theatre at reasonable prices. If it is the policy to experiment at the Experimental, let it not be merely for the sake of being "different," smart or "arty," but to develop new plays, new in form and content.

MORE HUNGRY MEN

TOM KROMER



PRESIDENT HOOVER screeched out from the headlines and screeched out from the magazines that hell there wasn't any depression and the neighbors would come through in a pinch for sure. The Red Cross squatted on their emergency rations and waited anxiously for an act of God that they might bustle and rustle to the rescue. Miners with their scrawny hungry white-faced women and croupy pellagra-ridden brats with the coal dust from the mines of West Virginia and Illinois and Pennsylvania in the creases of their aching bellies combed the rusty sulphur water for rusty frogs and crawfish and scoured the bare sassafrass hills for dandelion greens that they boiled in water without seasoning. After the rusty frogs and the crawfish and the dandelions were all gone the miners from West Virginia and Illinois and Pennsylvania thought that if they could come to the Capitol and show the Big Sticks and the High Muckity-mucks what they looked like they would maybe do something about their empty guts and keep the company elected and owned and paid sheriffs from kicking their ragged blankets and beds out into the mud that was the yellow sulphur clay when the rains came. And so they came and they couldn't talk very well to the Great so they made posters and the ones who could write printed on the posters what their grievances were and what they needed. Some of them demanded relief for they were starving in their rags and some prayed for it. The ones who demanded were singled out by the sheriffs for future action for it was plain that they were Reds. When they reached the White House the cops took their posters away from them and said they could march by the White House but to stay off the grounds. They sent a committee of three to see the President. The secretary led them back out the door and off the varnished floors and explained that the President would sure do something about the condition of the miners from West Virginia and Illinois and Pennsylvania.

The cops escorted them to the edge of town and when they got back to their shacks days after some of them found that their ragged blankets and beds were piled high by the sulphur creek when they got back and the doors to their shacks were barred and there were white notices on the doors that they couldn't read. Some of them left their beds there for they had no way of carrying them and started tramping down the road with their women and their kids and their scrawny shanked dogs fatter than their masters. Most of them had no dogs for the dogs had long ago left by instinct this place where there were no bones for the kids to suck on let alone bones for the dogs. And there was rumor that some of the miners had eaten their dogs and then went down in front of the company store and asked had any one seen hide

or hair of their dog?

It was 1931. Night and we are twenty men that moan and hock and spit and groan on the splintery floor of this box car and listen to the sing of the wheels on the rails and the roar of the wind underneath us. We are mechanics and school teachers and bricklayers and lawyers and street sweepers from Iowa and Texas, Rhode Island and Utah and Maine. A black boy in the corner sings bass and low

"Ahm weary totin' sech a load,

Tredgin' down that lonesome road."

We raise up on our elbows and sing with him,

"True love, true love, what have I done,

That you should treat me so."

This white faced kid in the green sweater holds his belly with both hands and moans. His skinny legs are cramped up in a knot to his chest and the sweat drips down his face and off his chin and sprinkles on the floor. We stick our heads out the box car door and wait for a flash of the white mile posts that fly past us.

"Fifty more miles," we tell this kid.

"Forty-nine more miles."

"Only forty-eight more miles now," we tell this kid.

After a while he passes out and we don't tell him how many more miles anymore. Pretty soon we hear this stiff walking over the tops. We lean far out the door and nail his legs as he dangles down from the tops. We pull him into the car and he takes this ice that he has stole from the reefers out of his shirt. We pull this sick kid's legs down from his chest and pack his belly with ice and watch the mile posts.

He stops sweating after a while and we know we got that ice too late and we know the appendix is busted.

This darky from South Carolina hums Lonesome Road Blues and the stiff next to me mutters he wishes to Jesus Christ he could get his fingers on a gat.

We do not expect the revolution from the Proletariat.

It was 1932.

Wise men scratched their heads and said the depression was the result of speculation and boom and what the country needed was a planned economy. Hungry-faced men with flashing black eyes and white teeth that snarled in the sun got up on soap boxes in the parks and on the street corners and spoke in whispers in shrieks in supplication and told their grimacing hungry gutted listeners that Morgan and Rockefeller and Ford and Mellon and the Dupont de Nemours and the others owned 80 per cent of the country and the cops would come about that time and take their blackjack and bang them against the heads of the men on the soap boxes until they crumpled in a heap so that the cops could



SEPTEMBER 28, 1936

more easily drag them to the Black Maria that waited on them at the curb. And the hungry gutted listeners that ate a bowl of mush for breakfast and would borrow a little coffee for lunch smirked and giggled nervously as they watched the cops give it to the Reds and then crept off down an alley to hunt in the rear of the restaurants for a snipe.

It was 1932 and St. Louis and me and the guy from Harvard and the guy from Columbia hopped off of this freight and started dinging the backdoors for a handout. It was night and no one gave us anything to eat and we went to the restaurants and they wouldn't give us anything to eat either. After a while me and this guy from Harvard and this guy from Columbia started foraging in the garbage cans in the rear of the restaurants for pieces of bread and half eaten grapefruit and I found a piece of bread already spread with butter for I was better at this than these guys for they had never done that at Harvard and Columbia. After a while the manager of a restaurant called a cop and he came back there in the alley and pinched us and said we were nothing but goddam swine and he oughta shoot a bunch of slop swillers like us.

They charged us with vagrancy but you don't want to expect too much help in the revolution from the lumpen proletariat.

It was 1933.

Men stretched in the long undulating soup lines down the blocks of the city streets in the rain, and as they shifted from one blistered foot to the other the line rose and fell and breathed like a gigantic tapeworm that passed through and swallowed for a little while in the swill that the missions were passing out for the glory of Jesus Christ. Their sunken eyes glared venomously at the "Jesus Saves" sign that mocked their misery in neon lights that flashed on and off as the dark came. They shuffled nearer and nearer to the barrels of slop that waited steaming and vomity in the oveny kitchens of the missions. Once in they caught the stale bread and the slopped over pie pan with the stenchy stew that the missions gave for the glory of Jesus Christ. They listened vacant faced to the sermon that droned incessantly from the platform in front of the tables and heard no word of it. They came outside again after a little while and tightened their belts over their aching guts and searched the gutters among the horse dung and the spit for a cigarette butt. They sat in the doorways and on the curbs in the evenings debating in fanatic fervor with themselves whether to listen long hours to the sermon in the missions for a flop or to take a chance on the cold splintery floors of the box cars in the railroad yards. Some of them, dreamers, sat on the curb and on the park benches and dreamed and saw themselves standing at their machines in their factories and saw themselves lined up at the office window on pay day for the yellow pay envelope filled with green money. Some of them way-laid passersby on the street, in their over-wrought minds, and banged them on the heads with clubs and pulled them over in the shadows. And when they searched them, their pockets were filled with green bills that would keep them the rest of their lives in plenty. Some of them saw the armored cars with their treasure from the banks drop one of those white sacks filled to bulging with green money and no one saw them drop it but them and they picked it up and hid it under their coats and went down to the railroad station and bought a ticket a long ways away from there and woke up from their riches with the slap of a policeman's billy against their feet. They get up from there and sulk down the street without looking back and the mission doors will be locked by this time.

HIS SOUL IS MARCHING ON SARA BARD FIELD

● BOOKS

NOT John Brown's departed soul is referred to in the above title but that of Stephen Vincent Benét who is very much with us, author of "John Brown's Body" and of "Burning City."*

Between these two books is an impressive growth in both technique and spirit. Even the short lapse of time between our Civil War days and the present allows the poet recording the former enough distance for both escape from immediate reality and for the romantic touch. Perhaps there is no greater challenge to the poet both as man and artist than to deal with his own time. Most poets cannot do it, however ardently they desire to do so.

This book of here and now, of New York City in the nineteen-thirties and of Austrian Socialists in nineteen-thirty-four never pauses on a backward look. It makes no compromise with romance. It is grimly, powerfully, achingly concerned with life as we are now living it. It has no retrospection and small prophecy. Even love, the eternal romance, is glimpsed through gaps made by wreckers of old buildings torn down to make way for the new "blank face of stone" in an era of feverish discarding of old material as of old systems.

The highest flames from this book are kindled by the burning of old ideas, above all by the highly inflammable stuff of illusions. Yesterday is the day dying not by flood or whirlwind, far less by mere quiet cessation of gradually weakened breath. It is dying by fire—noisy, explosive, insane and cruel fire. Readers of the "Burning City" hear the crackle and roar of flames ignited by powder and shell. They feel their heat and swiftness, see their beautiful, dread color. The author himself is involved with flame mixed of indignation, admiration, disgust, love, horror, despair and hope. These flames light up luridly his day and generation. They also bewilder him.

If Mr. Benét is moving leftward it is by the propulsive force of a flame-tide, not by dogmatism, cold theory or blind fanaticism. These poems are written by intense, if perplexed, emotion and experience. They are red hot in spots. The reader needs, as the author did, the snow and the cool arbutus of the noble "Ode to Walt Whitman" to ease blisters from such poems as "Litany For Dictatorships" and "Ode to Austrian Socialists" and even from the excoriating portions of the Walt Whitman Ode. He needs the lighter lyric play in the second section of the book after the heavy roar of menacing flames in the first.

This is no book for the weak-nerved escapist, for readers with no dare in the eye, no grapple in the hand. Only the bravely believing, the hopefully unafraid will bear with it from cover to cover—these and the serious explorer of the Present.

Even Mr. Benét quakes under the skyscrapers and machine gun fire of his day. He quakes with doubt. "For Those Who Are As Right As Any" betrays the agnostic uncertainty emphasized in lighter vein in "Sparrows" when he asks to be that common bird "with the black, wary eye that marks the doubter" because sparrows in our "iron times" "are the last things that get shot."

This doubt mounts into the pessimistic "Nightmares," of the last section, those ironic arraignments of our science-worshipping, war-pledged civilization that form the closing section of this book. Even these are hot with contemptuous sorrow. "Burning City" is a Phoenix bird. Its wings are afame.

*BURNING CITY by Stephen Vincent Benét. (Farrar & Rinehart)
\$2.00

Its nest beneath them cold and ashen gray. But the legend of new wings from ashes of the old ones is persistently written in the closing lines of the "Ode to Walt Whitman" to the sound of "The broad flood, the eternal motion, the restless-hearted,
Always, forever, Mississippi, the God."

EPIC OR NOT?

THE EARTH TREMBLES, by Jules Romains (Alfred A. Knopf) \$2.50

M. ROMAINS knows how to write. M. Romains teems with epic notions. It has been said "Men of Good Will" is his masterpiece. The whole structure of this work is designed to overpower, from the lush format to the elaborate character index. Even its length makes "Anthony Adverse" puny by comparison.

The book is an attempt to reproduce the texture of life itself, to paint on a broad canvas the whole movement of history in our times. Successfully accomplished, such a plan would make "Men of Good Will" one of the great epics of world literature. So far, to one reviewer, at least, it is not.

"The Earth Trembles," which is the fifth volume, includes two books: "Flood Warning," Book IX, and "The Powers That Be," Book X. They extend the lives of the people we met in the previous books up to the doorstep of the war.

"Flood Warning" contains an analysis of the pre-war labor movement in France. It foreshadows the coming flood of social revolution. "The Powers That Be" contains an account of the futile efforts of petty politicians to avert the tide of war.

The subject matter of these two books is important. But it needs the handling of a great artist. Far from being a great artist, Romains is barely a competent craftsman. From much practise, he has learned how to put his material together, frequently with great effectiveness. But he does not seem to know how to evaluate and select his material. He loads it down with symbolism, and blurs its implications.

For example: "Flood Warning" has a capably written description of the 1910 general strike in Paris. Promising beginning. Then we have detailed analysis of an individual workman's industrial psychology; how a lathe worker feels about his lathe. So far so good. Then, plop! M. Romains drops in the symbolism. It is a can of red lead. Two workmen are painting a tank. Two capitalists discuss the labor movement. One is forcibly reminded that M. Romains is a liberal. Follows bourgeois intrigue among befuddled members of an anti-war cult.

The second book tells of the historical circumstances out of which the war was brewed. It is taken up with the psychological problems of liberal politicians—their sex lives, megalomanias and ideas of art, all in one big mosaic.

M. Romains has a shrewd insight into character, a sensitive appreciation of detail, and the ability to communicate these. The style is bumpy now and then, and an occasional idiomatic awkwardness suggests slipshod translation. There is much interesting intellectual discussion, a few good, human portraits. But as a whole, this work muffs its point. The drift of history is there, but not its meaning.

But gift horses are not to be subjected to molar scrutiny. We are grateful for something interesting to read in an age of so much print. On the other hand, when a bon bourgeois French Professor foists off his notebooks as an epic, one cavils. The book is worth buying and having. It should be read by those interested in the literature of our times, but not as its great monument. Not while there is Thomas Mann about to do effortlessly what Romains fails at laboriously. Does someone remark about German clumsiness and French grace?

WILL WILLIAMS

CORRESPONDENCE

DAVID PRICE CRITICIZED

(*There was some objection to and criticism of David Price's article "Primaries in Los Angeles" [PACIFIC WEEKLY Sept. 7]*)

Editor, Pacific Weekly:

While Dave Price made a good analysis of the factors involved in the recent primary election in Los Angeles, I feel that his attitude toward Harlan Palmer is slightly biased. In at least one particular, moreover, his article gave an unfortunate impression. Palmer was not involved in the failure of the Guaranty Building and Loan Association. The facts are that Palmer came into the situation after the institution had failed to try and save something for the depositors. I represented depositors in the Guaranty and followed the situation throughout and I have never heard a word of criticism—in fact, nothing but warm approval—of Judge Palmer's conduct and actions. Palmer's attitude towards the right of labor to organize and to bargain collectively is known to be sympathetic; moreover he has a reputation for fairness which his record as a publisher sustains. He is not a model candidate by any means and he is unquestionably conservative in his economic views, but he does present an attractive alternative to the incumbent, Buron Fitts.

Carey McWilliams

LARSSON CORRECTS

Editor, Pacific Weekly:

"Pacific Weekly's" proof-reader caused me to make some curious statements in my article (September 21): In the next to the last paragraph, I wrote "His distortions are the contrary of those of Greco," not "of those of Greece." In the last sentence, I grouped Van Gogh, Cezanne, Degas and Seurat as "XIX Century masters," not "matters." I did not mean to be as "quaint" as the proof-reader made me seem in the last sentence of part I. "And the wind silenced even that sound" (the natives' mourning) "—the wind, the sea-sound, the dropping leaf's sound, the sound of opening flower" is what I wrote.

But I myself am responsible for an error of more consequence: Van Gogh sent his ear to a woman in a house in Arles which he and Gauguin frequented, not to Gauguin, although legends do make Gauguin the one who received the ghastly present. It was a mistake it was stupid of me to make. I apologize.

Sincerely,

San Francisco

Raymond E. F. Larsson

THE SOVIET CONFESSIONS

To the Editor:

In your explanation of "Those Soviet Confessions" you appear to me to have come nearest the truth of any comments I have read—by reminding that those executed persons were revolutionaries of long standing. Though the truth is hard to get, it appears certain that they were Trotzkyites. Trotzky's program was to agitate simultaneously throughout the world, putting the entire world into as upheaved a state of flux as possible, guiding it, by means of the Communist Party, toward that millennial moment at which the party could declare the dictatorship of the proletariat and step into power. Stalin about-faced. He declared that Russia would have to put herself into order first, then stand as a model from which nations might copy voluntarily. The Trotzkyite revolutionaries had devoted their lives to the Trotzky program. When, under Stalin, it vanished under their noses, is it a wonder that they turned to a plot to redden Red Russia herself?

Their spectacular confessions were the least important part of the situation. Your explanation of its psychology seems accurate to me. The motivations of their plot are what I'd call important, and I offer an amateur reading between the lines for whatever it is worth.

Very truly yours,

L. C. W.

Crockett, California

CLASSIFIED ADS

RATES for these effective classifieds as follows: 40¢ per line; 3 lines for \$1.00; 35¢ for each additional line. 6 insertions: 30¢ per line; 4 lines for \$1.00. Copy deadline is Tuesday for the issue of the following Monday.

RUSSIAN CLASSES: Beginners and intermediate, will start at the American Russian Institute, 68 Post Street, San Francisco. Telephone SUtter 4298.

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PACIFIC WEEKLY

SEPTEMBER 28, 1936

GROUPS IN ACTION • THEY TELL ME • • •

SAN FRANCISCO THEATER UNION

The San Francisco Theatre Union's production of "Bury The Dead" opens Friday night, September 25, at the City Club Theatre, Fourteenth and Alice Streets, Oakland. Additional performances will be given Saturday and on Friday and Saturday nights, October 2 and 3.

This is an important moment in local theatre history. Even including Clifford Odets' sensitive and explosive pieces of theatre art, no new American play concerned with the welfare of human beings has excited so widespread and intense an enthusiasm. In this "savage and ironic poem, etched in scorn and passion" twenty-three-year old Irwin Shaw "sounds a clarion call to the dead and living alike. The dead will return to a life of which they were cheated, the living go on to a new world of which they, too, were dispossessed."

Shaw himself wrote, after the play had become the sensation of the American theatre, following its New York performances last April, "'Bury The Dead' was a play put on originally in desperate straits, with desperate enthusiasm. Actors forswore jobs; the two directors, Worthington Miner and Walter Hart, each busy with other work, forswore sleep. The New Theatre League mortgaged itself to the roof.

"The first play has been written by a young man who does not want to die. He hopes that there are many other young men who do not want to die, and that they will be moved by the play, for the time is coming, and not so far away, when young men will be asked to put their lives on precarious firing steps to be shot at by the monstrously well-organized war machine of any one of two dozen nations.

"What is there so dear that it is worth dying for? Very few things—and never the things for which one nation fights another. What do I want with oil, mines or guncotton?

"I am not a pacifist, and 'Bury The Dead' is not a pacifist play. I am ready to die for an idea, for an ideal . . . Shall we fight to save our park-bench beds?"

Following the opening performances of "Bury The Dead," the Theatre Union will open its training school, offering a full course in all branches of theatre work. Registration will be at the Workshop, 2229 Geary Street, Monday and Tuesday, September 28 and 29. Classes start September 30, and are held at night.

Ralph Bruenn

JACQUES ROUMAIN FREED

Jacques Roumain and two fellow Haitian political prisoners were freed recently, reports "Le Cri des Negres," a Negro paper published in Paris, France.

Roumain, reputed greatest of Haitian poets, and champion of the people, was sentenced to three years in prison in Haiti on a charge of importing arms into the country. The charge was based on an intercepted letter sent to Roumain by a friend in New York. The letter contained a reference to "materiaux"—pamphlets and magazines—which were being sent under separate cover. The court chose to interpret the French word "materiaux" as referring to arms and ammunition, although no evidence was introduced at the court martial proceedings to prove the charge. Roumain, wielding powerful influence among his countrymen, was vigorously opposed to the president-dictator of Haiti, Stenio Vincent. For this reason, it is charged, he was made the victim of a framed charge.

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WESTERN WRITERS CONGRESS

AS THE MIDDLE CLASS comes to realize clearly the influence of economic and political conditions on the welfare of its members, writers, artists and intellectuals have come to take an ever widening part in the social life around them. In many foreign countries, and in our own East and Middle West, congresses of writers have been held to discuss not only the specific problems of their craft, not only methods of obtaining economic security, but also the best ways of "relating himself to the social scene," of combatting the forces of reaction and suppression to preserve the integrity and dignity of the intellectual life. If writers and artists are to express the aspiration, the needs, the emotional, intellectual and spiritual life of the inarticulate, they must know what moves men and women, workers and non-workers, as social beings.

A call has gone out to many western writers to meet in Congress in San Francisco for three days in mid November to discuss all such problems, to become acquainted with one another and to consider their common interests.

"We hold" says the call, "That the privilege of the writer to create in accordance with the dictates of his conscience is inescapably related to the rights of freedom of speech and press, and of minorities to voice social theories as yet unpopular with the majority. America is not, and cannot hope to be, unaffected by the powerful and sinister forces which threaten to destroy every cultural value, by war and tyranny. The writer can be, and must be, an influence against these destructive forces."

Among the sponsors of this congress, in which Lincoln Steffens was interested and which therefore bears his name as leading supporter, and poets and playwrights, novelists and essayists, journalists, directors and scenarists, critics and columnists from the Coast states to the Rockies: Marie de L. Welch, Witter Bynner, Stewart Edward White, Upton Sinclair, Mabel Dodge Luhan, William Saroyan, Sophus Keith Winter, George West, Harvey Fergusson, Lillian Symes, Haakon M. Chevalier, John Steinbeck, Tess Slesinger, Paul Jordan-Smith, Nathanael West, Hildegarde Flanner, Sara Bard Field, Charles Erskine Scott Wood, James Hopper. These are but a few. There are many differences of viewpoint between them, economic, philosophical, political, aesthetic: But they are agreed on one point, that the critical problems faced by the writer today can be discussed with great benefit in such a conference, and that to form an association of those whose basic interests are identical will help build the dyke against the destruction of all cultural values, the suppression and tyranny with which the world is faced today.

Anyone wanting information about this congress should communicate with Mrs. H. M. Chevalier, secretary, at Room 214, 604 Montgomery Street, San Francisco.

SINCLAIR LEWIS and John C. Moffitt have co-adapted Lewis' novel "It Can't Happen Here," and twenty-eight WPA Federal Theater Projects throughout the country will produce simultaneously on October 20th. Twenty-four requests for blocks of tickets have already been made. Members of the Dressmakers' Association requested 1000 tickets for the show as soon as possible after opening night.

SIMON AND SCHUSTER have dedicated their Fall, 1936, catalogue to Erasmus. The dedication reads:

"This Catalogue appears on the four hundredth anniversary of the Erasmus of Rotterdam. Living in an age which makes every man of good-will fear for the future of our civilization we thought it a good idea to dedicate this Catalogue of our current publications to the memory of this great prophet of Humor and Tolerance."

WHAT-NOTS: Cyrus Le Roy Baldridge, commander of an American Legion post, and author of the pamphlet "Americanism: What Is It?" has an article in the September issue of Scribner's called "Is the American Legion American?" . . . Dr. Harry Elmer Barnes, *World-Telegram* columnist, contributes an article on the Spanish situation to the September issue of the Champion of Youth. In the same issue Harvey O'Connor, author of "Steel-Dictator," has an article called "Steel Sovereigns." . . . Genevieve Taggard, whose new volume of poems, "Calling Western Union," will be out October 1, has just returned from Russia, where she spent the summer . . . John Langdon Davies has gone to Madrid . . . Charles Yale Harrison has gone to Norway to interview Leon Trotsky, preparatory to writing a biography of him . . . "Wake Up and Live" by Dorothea Brande (Simon and Schuster) has, to date, sold 70,000.

ELLA WINTER